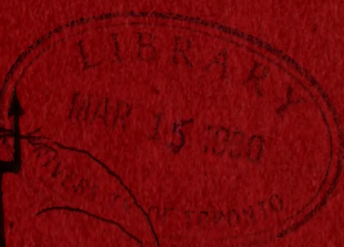


# IN HADES

BY  
DR. D. LOWREY





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## In Hades.

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WITH his clans in council assembled,  
The lord of the regions profane  
Asked two of his mightiest angels  
To rise in their place, and explain  
What progress their legions were making  
In his vicious and vast domain—  
In his distant and dour domain.

The first to make answer was Bacchus  
Of ancient and evil renown,  
Who said: "Spite of rabid reformers  
Who seek to hold wrong-doing down  
By hand of the law, I am able  
To state that I still wear the crown—  
Though sore-pressed I still wear the crown.

“ Of all my corrupting agencies  
The saloon is foremost by far;  
But over it, while I am speaking,  
There blazes an ominous star,  
And hosts are preparing for battle  
Whose slogan is ‘ Banish the Bar!’  
The hour has struck—Banish the bar.

“ From hamlet, from town, and from city,  
From prairie, and hillslope, and dale,  
Comes a sound like the roar of ocean  
Before which my warriors quail,  
And this is the message it brings me—  
The bar-room must bow to the gale—  
Go down in the wrath of the gale.

“ If so we shall turn to Narcotia—  
High Priestess of hell, now, as when  
She first called from hemlock and poppy  
The spirits that haunted her den,  
And heaped high on her burning altars  
The aims and ambitions of men—  
The smothered ambitions of men.





"The first to make answer was Bacchus,  
Of ancient and evil renown."





“Centuries later came Nicotine,  
The comeliest devil of all;  
How I longed for a comrade so leal  
When, standing with back to the wall,  
I fought the hot foeman! Behold him  
’Mong the princes of Tophet a Saul.  
Majestic, imposing—a Saul!”

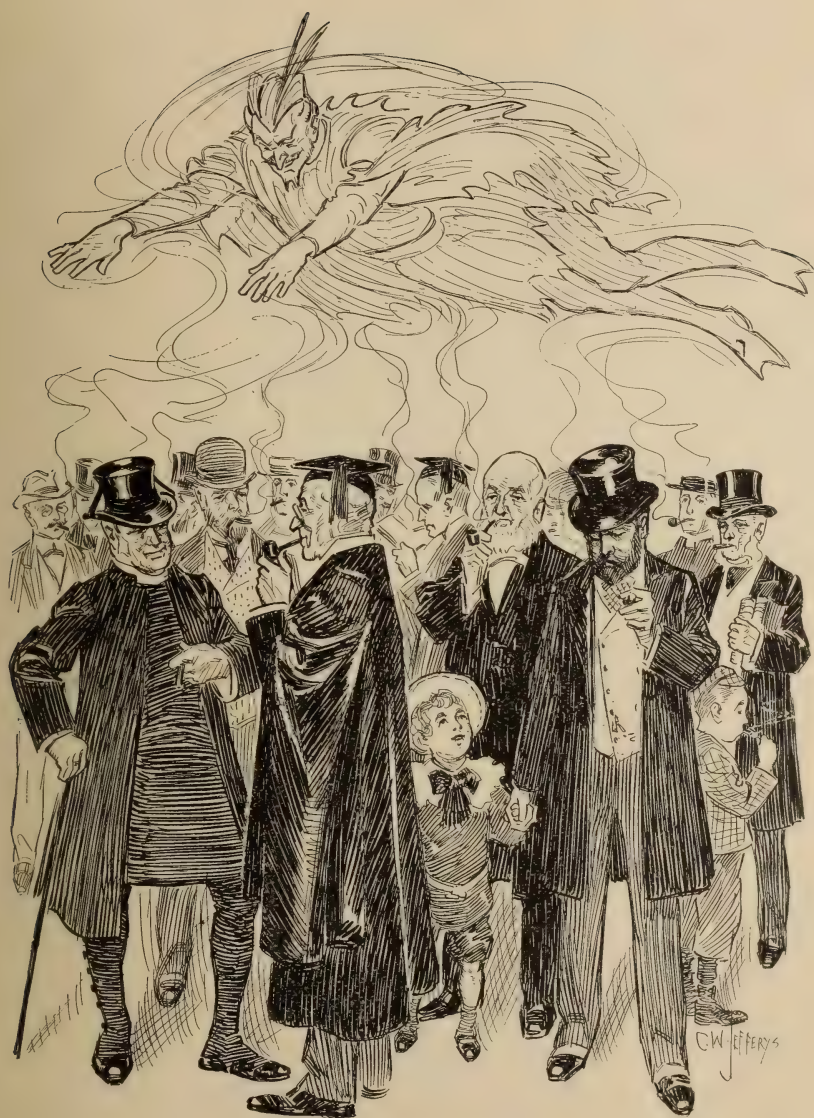
This heated harangue having ended,  
Beelzebub called Nicotine.  
Then that bland and engaging spirit  
Of angelic splendor and mien,  
With eloquence stolen from heaven  
Stood forth to enlighten the scene—  
To shed lurid light on the scene.

“As your Majesty knoweth, I foster,”  
Said he, “among peoples uncouth,  
And the cultured as well, a habit  
That sways without reason or ruth  
Whole nations. I scoff at the prayers  
Of mothers—concerned about youth—  
The perils and pitfalls of youth.

“ A custom that coarsens the morals—  
    Puts Will under Appetite's rule—  
Is one to sustain. The smokers' club  
    Is your Majesty's Sunday School,  
And the songs that rise through clouds of blue  
    Your diet of worship in full—  
    Your incense and praises in full.

“ A question is pondered in churches,  
    In sessions convened on behalf  
Of ' the wandering boy,' and the problem  
    Is solved in a way makes me laugh;  
While they're laying deep plans to catch him  
    I'm hauling him in with my gaff—  
    Impaled on my narcotic gaff.

“ And that boy to maturity grown  
    Doth arguments endless evoke,  
Why comes he not in?—the old question—  
    And we smile at the gray-haired joke,  
For we know the weightiest reason is  
    He bows at the altar of smoke —  
    In the dreamy joss-house of smoke.



“—the many good souls that help us—  
The doctors and deacons that smoke.”





“ Nor opium eater, nor slave of drink  
Is more surely baited and caught;  
The teeth of the trap are less cruel  
But the spring is the strongest wrought;  
And, then, it is quite respectable,  
Which some other habits are not—  
Which most other vices are not.

“ ‘ Respectable,’ ah! that reminds me,  
Hell’s blessing I pause to invoke  
On the many good souls that help us—  
The doctors and deacons that smoke,  
On a million fathers that fasten  
On their children’s shoulders a yoke—  
On the necks of their offspring a yoke.

“ On hundreds of learned professors,  
And dozens of dignified deans;  
On hosts of teachers that mould and mar  
Developing boys in their teens;  
Corrupting the young by example  
Is ever the surest of means—  
The surest and *meanest* of means.

“ Know they, or care, that their Captain said,  
When he trod humanity's deck,  
'Twere better to lie beneath the sea  
With a millstone about one's neck  
Than to be by example the cause  
Of even one little one's wreck—  
One simple confiding child's wreck?

“ Keep these mentors in midnight we must,  
For, if ever the light of day  
Dissolve the glamor, our cause is lost,  
There will be the devil to pay,  
So we'll quietly keep on doping—  
'Tis the only reliable way—  
The old and effectual way.

“ I've snared the lords of creation,  
I've thrown the noose round their necks,  
And now I'm pursuing their offspring  
With wiles that the mothers perplex;  
And soon 'tis my hope and ambition  
To capture—why not?—the fair sex—  
The gentler and cleaner-souled sex.





"Lo! the arches of Hades rang  
With the pæan the quartette rendered."



“ Adam snared—Eve tempted and taken,  
And their progeny all in line—  
In course of a few generations  
With the world for my concubine,  
And earth’s hills aflame with my fires,  
How we’d flout the Powers Divine!  
Good men, angels and Book Divine!

“ We are labelled promoters of vice,  
And, doubtless, the title applies,  
But honor or odium, whichever ’tis,  
Must be shared with our good allies;  
To the lot our warmest thanks are due,  
Then let our acknowledgments rise—  
In songs of praise let them rise.”

The idea caught the convention,  
And forward Beelzebub sprang,  
And blending his voice with the others,  
Lo! the arches of Hades rang  
With the pæan the quartette rendered—  
And this was the chorus they sang—  
The echoing song that they sang.



“Let favors and benisons fall  
On friends and supporters all—  
Who help us the weak to enthrall.  
Accurst be the critic who draws  
Mankind's ken to the broken laws  
With his preachments and pious saws.

“Enthroned in diaphanous calm,  
We yield King Tobacco the palm,  
And crown him with laurel and psalm.  
He sweepeth his circles afar,  
Provoking least protest and jar,  
But leaving on nations his scar.

“The world to him sacrifice brings,  
From the pauper he tribute wrings,  
From conquered commanders and kings.  
To our deputies then be thanks,  
Confusion and worse to the cranks,  
Who aim at impairing our ranks. Amen.”





